



PUBLIC DISCLOSURE COMMISSION

711 Capitol Way Rm. 206, PO Box 40908 • Olympia, Washington 98504-0908 • (360) 753-1111 • FAX (360) 753-1112
Toll Free 1-877-601-2828 • E-mail: pdcc@pdcc.wa.gov • Website: www.pdcc.wa.gov

November 30, 2006

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Lori Anderson
(360) 664-2737
Toll free 1-877-601-2828

Explosion of Independent Advertising Prompts Commission Call for Change

Olympia – The Washington State Public Disclosure Commission today called on the Governor and the State Legislature to institute sweeping campaign finance restrictions on organizations including partnerships, corporations, unions, and membership associations.

The Commission, in a unanimous vote, called for legislation that would prohibit organizations from paying for independent advertisements or helping to fund a political committee's independent advertisements that attempt to influence state executive, legislative, and appellate court elections.

"The dramatic and overwhelming increase of money spent on independent advertisements interferes with the fundamental democratic process," said Commissioner Mike Connelly. "It's obvious that millions of dollars would not be spent if the spenders didn't expect to receive a benefit. We're attempting to strike a balance between candidates and special interest organizations who try to influence government."

The recommended changes include:

- Prohibit the use of corporate or association general treasury funds for independent expenditures or electioneering communications to influence state executive, legislative, and appellate court elections.
- Prohibit the contribution of general treasury funds to PACs who would make independent expenditures or electioneering communication to influence state executive, legislative, and appellate court elections.
- Place a dollar limit on the amount an individual or PAC (including a party or caucus committee) may annually contribute to another PAC. Also limit the amount each PAC may annually receive from any source.
- Impose an overall annual cap on the amount of aggregate contributions an individual or political committee may contribute to all PACs supporting or opposing candidates.

The Commission also called for improvements in campaign finance disclosure by accelerating the reporting time frame for pre-election reports and requiring special campaign finance reporting in the primary election.

The Commission began exploring possible changes in campaign finance laws when independent advertising poured into the 2006 contested elections for Washington State Supreme Court justice and legislative elections. Over \$5.5 million was spent on independent advertising for these elections this year.

#